



# What Does This Mean?

A Service for **Reformation**

WORSHIP KIT

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## Notes and Ordering Information

This is a worship service for Reformation that takes its title and themes from Luther's Small Catechism and provides scriptural answers to the questions of what it means to be saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Hymns include original lyrics set to the tunes of "Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Thy Word," "O God, Our Help in Ages Past" and "For All the Saints."

*Printed bulletins (8 1/2" x 11") are available. Code ???*

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## Newsletter/Bulletin Notices

### Newsletter Notice

Join us for a Reformation worship service designed around the question so famously asked by Martin Luther: “What does this mean?” In word and song and Scripture we together answer the question of what it means to be saved by grace through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Let the meaning of the Reformation sink deep within your souls.

### Bulletin Notice

Welcome to this Reformation worship service designed around the question so famously asked by Martin Luther: What does this mean? We who in this world so desperately seek meaning in our lives, find it in the death and resurrection of our Lord. In word and song and Scripture in this service we together celebrate what it means to be saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

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## Order of Service

“What Does It Mean?” ..... Erhalt uns, Herr LM

*(Jeremiah 31:31, 33-34 with a hymn based on Luther's Small Catechism)*

What does it mean that God's good will,  
Once thundered down from Sinai's hill,  
Is uttered now to pierce our hearts,  
Commandments that our God imparts?

¶ The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

What does it mean, what doubts relieve,  
That we may speak what we believe  
And in confessing witness bear  
To Father, Savior, Comforter?

¶ This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my Law within them, and will write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

What does it mean that we may pray  
To God as Father day by day,  
Make known our needs, God's grace implore,  
And vow allegiance evermore?

Ⓟ No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, "Know the Lord," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord.

What does it mean that water poured  
Conveys the promise of the Lord,  
And in the forms of bread and wine,  
We gather in Christ's love to dine?

Ⓟ For I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

What does it mean? God's on our side;  
By grace we have been justified  
Through faith in Jesus Christ, our Lord,  
As taught in God's unbroken Word.

Prayer of the Day • Children's Message

First Lesson..... Exodus 13:3-10 and 14

*(When your child asks, "What does this mean?")*

Psalm 46, "The Reformation Psalm"..... St. Anne

*(Come and behold what God has done.)*

God is our Refuge and our Strength, our Helper ever near.  
The Lord of hosts is on our side to shelter us from fear.

Though mountains fall and storms arise and fearful tempests blow,  
Our God is with us, and he leads where peaceful waters flow.

God's steadfast help will surely come as certain as the dawn.  
The Lord of hosts is on our side, so let all fear be gone!

Come and behold what God has done: as adversaries yield,  
He breaks the bow and snaps the spear and burns with fire the shield.

The trembling nations hear his voice, their awesome Sov'reign own:  
"Be still, and know that I am God, and I will reign alone!"

O God our Refuge, God our Strength, accept the praise we bring  
For mercy shown by grace alone through Christ, our Savior-King!

Second Lesson..... Acts 2:1-12

*(All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?")*

Gospel Acclamation ..... Sine Nomine

The Holy Spirit, as the Lord foretold,  
With flames of fire descending now behold,  
That all might gather in the Shepherd's fold. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Gospel ..... John 8:31-36

*(You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.)*

Christ's true disciples let us prove to be,  
Firm in the Word remaining steadfastly,  
Blest with the truth that makes us truly free. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Homily

A Confession of Faith..... Darwall's 148th

The Father's mighty word once said, "Let there be light!"  
Chaotic darkness heard and yielded to his might.  
Things great and small,  
God's saints confess his pow'r to bless; God made them all!

Christ Jesus we believe, who came at God's own hour,  
Whom Mary did conceive by God the Spirit's pow'r.

Great peace he gives:  
The Crucified who for us died forever lives!

God's ransomed saints believe in God the Holy Ghost,  
By whom we all receive the faith in which we boast.

Forgiven, we shall flee our graves.  
The Lord who saves has set us free!

Offering

## Prayers

### Lord's Prayer

Benediction ..... Ephesians 3:16-21

☐ According to the riches of his glory, God grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. May you have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

☑ **Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.**

Closing Hymn ..... Ein Feste Burg (Rhythmic) 8787 55 567

A mighty Fortress is our God, a trusty Shield and Weapon;  
He helps us free from ev'ry need that hath us now o'ertaken.  
The old evil Foe now means deadly woe;  
Deep guile and great might are his dread arms in fight;  
On earth is not his equal.

With might of ours can naught be done, soon were our loss effected;  
But for us fights the Valiant One, whom God himself elected.  
Ask ye, who is this? Jesus Christ it is.  
Of Sabaoth Lord, and there's none other God;  
He holds the field forever.

Though devils all the world should fill, all eager to devour us.  
We tremble not, we fear no ill, they shall not overpower us.  
This world's prince may still scowl fierce as he will,  
He can harm us none, he's judged; the deed is done;  
One little word can fell him.

The Word they still shall let remain nor any thanks have for it;  
He's by our side upon the plain with his good gifts and Spirit.  
And take they our life, goods, fame, child and wife,  
Though these all be gone, our vict'ry has been won;  
The Kingdom ours remaineth.

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## Complete Script For Worship Leaders

- **What Does This Mean?**—based on Luther’s Small Catechism—is sung by the congregation to the tune Erhalt uns, Herr LM, interspersed with words from Jeremiah 31:31, 33-34 spoken by the pastor:

What does it mean that God’s good will,  
Once thundered down from Sinai’s hill,  
Is uttered now to pierce our hearts,  
Commandments that our God imparts?

- Ⓟ The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

What does it mean, what doubts relieve,  
That we may speak what we believe  
And in confessing witness bear  
To Father, Savior, Comforter?

- Ⓟ This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my Law within them, and will write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

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## Children's Message

- The **Children's Message** is delivered by the pastor or other worship leader:

*(Needed: a picture of a question mark)*

**P** Hello, boys and girls and Happy Reformation Day. Today I brought something with me. *(Hold up the picture of the question mark.)* What is this? *(Allow the children to respond.)* That's right! It's a question mark. When do we use a question mark? *(Allow the children to respond.)* That's right! We use it when we have a question about something.

We celebrate the Reformation today because over 500 years ago a man named Martin Luther had a lot of questions about what the church at the time was doing. One of his favorite questions was "What does this mean?"

The church then was saying that people could buy forgiveness by purchasing a piece of paper, but Martin Luther said that the Bible teaches that forgiveness a free gift. So he asked the the church leaders why in a letter he nailed to the door of his church.

That question led to a lot more questions. So Martin Luther put together a book he called the *Small Catechism* to answer many of those questions. He helped people to understand what the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, Baptism and Holy Communion meant, according to Scripture. We still use this book today to help us remember what it means

“Deliver us from evil” calls for a definition—actually a kind of laundry list—of various kinds of evil we might encounter, from the bad things that can happen to us to the malicious things people can do to one another ... ending with the most serious evil of all, that one might lose one’s faith in Jesus Christ (or never come to faith in him at all) and end up going to hell! It doesn’t get any worse than that, Luther says.

Meanwhile, for the article in the Creed that begins, “I believe in the Holy Spirit,” Luther points out that even believing in God—believing in Jesus Christ as your Savior—is not something we can do by ourselves. “I believe that by myself I cannot believe,” the catechism teaches us ... but the Holy Spirit can work in me the faith I need, by providing the Word of God, for example—the good news about what Jesus has done for me by his suffering and death to give me something to believe in.

The point is: The Word of God is supposed to MEAN something. Not just phrases we repeat without thinking or routines we rattle through, but concepts to be studied, examined, compared, put to the test, practiced ... and UNDERSTOOD.

Luther came by this concern honestly, of course, living at a time in the Church’s history when much of religious life was a matter of simply going through the right motions at the right time, mechanically. No, Luther insisted, it’s supposed to MEAN something.

Specifically, it’s supposed to mean something TO ME. Jesus Christ is not just a figure in history (or even theology), but “Jesus Christ is my Lord.” What does this mean? That he has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature. That he has not only forgiven my sin but has even undone my death, whenever it occurs.

Baptism isn’t just water—not even water commanded by God and connected with God’s Word—but a blessing that makes a difference in my life, that defines who I am as a child of God and offers me God’s great and precious promises.

The Ten Commandments, then, are not just a list of dos and don’ts, but a delineation of God’s good will for me as I live under God and among other people.

It’s the message God was trying to get across in today’s Old Testament reading, that Passover is not just an ancient ceremony, but one that MEANS something, that TEACHES me something, that defines my place in the family of those who are my brothers and sisters in the faith, with whom I walk together as we journey toward the goal God has in store for us.

The same is true, the catechism teaches us, of the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, and the Sacraments of the Church—gifts of God, all of them, meant to make a difference, eventually an eternal difference. It’s an attitude that goes all the way back to the first Passover: “When somebody asks you, ‘What does this mean?’ make sure you have an answer.”